

Action Item

Governmental Relations Committee

Approval of the Minutes of the February 5
and March 15, 2001, Meetings

MINUTES

Governmental Relations Committee

Meeting of February 5, 2001

Committee members present Evonne Seron Schulze, *Vice Chair*
Phillip J. Forhan
Robert A. Hanff
Lance Izumi
Guillermo Rodriguez, Jr.
Alan S. Arkatov, *ex officio*
Carol Chandler, *ex officio*

Other Commissioners present
Kyo "Paul" Jhin
Velma Montoya
Ralph Pesqueira
Kyh Smeby
Melinda G. Wilson

Committee member absent Howard Welinsky, *Chair*

Call to order Vice Chair Schulze called the meeting of the February 5, 2001 meeting of the California Postsecondary Education Commission Governmental Relations Committee to order at 10:24 a.m. in the University of Southern California, Davidson Executive Conference Center, Embassy Room, 3415 South Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, California. She noted that all members of the committee but Committee Chair Welinsky were present.

Approval of the minutes Vice Chair Schulze asked for a motion to approve the minutes for the December 11, 2000 committee meeting. A motion was so made, seconded, and the committee voted without dissent to approve the minutes as submitted.

A Blueprint for Progress: 2001-02 Legislative and Budget Priorities for the Commission Vice Chair Schulze called upon staff member Marge Chisholm to present the Commission's Legislative and Budget Priorities Report and to provide an overview of how Commission staff employs this report in its work throughout the year.

Ms. Chisholm said the *Blueprint for Progress* report presents the 2001-02 legislative and budget priorities for the Commission and that it was being presented for action. She said the annual legislative and budget priorities document, together with other positions adopted by the Commission in reports like *Providing for Progress*, guides staff during the legislative and budget discussions of the year. She noted that some 25 percent of the current legislative membership are new to those elected positions. In that environment, she said it is important for Commission staff to be able to provide members and their staff with quality information and sound advice.

Ms. Chisholm reiterated that staff believes, and the *Blueprint for Progress* reflects, that access, affordability, and accountability are the primary principles necessary to guide higher education policy in the California. As the Legislature and Administration consider proposals during the year to address higher education, staff will make the Commission's views known. She provided examples of the tools, such as the Legislative Handbooks, staff uses to assist legislators and their staff. It includes many helpful Commission Factsheets on higher education. Staff also provides each legislator with a Legislative Profile containing many education-related facts – such as the number of high school graduates attending college — about the legislator's district.

Commissioners discussed the effectiveness of these Commission tools and ways in which they could be augmented with information like the cost of California Community Colleges compared to other states. In response to a comment by Commissioner Wilson, Executive Director Fox said the Commission remains attentive to the issue of educational equity and it is reflected throughout its materials. Vice Chair Schulze urged staff to look at the Commission's materials from the point of view of legislators and their staff members. Chair Arkatov recommended making these individual materials accessible via the Commission Website. Vice Chair Schulze noted the effort to poll Commissioners to identify any legislators known well by one or more Commission members.

Ms. Chisholm reviewed the *Condition of Higher Education* report that is also used by staff during legislative contacts. She said the governmental relations unit also distributes copies of the *Guide to Colleges and Universities, 2000*. These materials are also available via the Commission Website.

Ms. Chisholm said staff was in the process of developing a Commission Day at the Legislature in April in order for Commissioners to meet directly with legislative members and staff. She said the Governmental Relations Committee would meet in March, as it does annually, between regularly scheduled Commission meetings to address pending legislation for the upcoming session. She said staff would provide the committee with a matrix of bills and recommended positions for discussion.

Vice Chair Schulze said that it was planned to hold the Commission Legislative Day in conjunction with the regular April meeting. She said Commissioners should provide staff with legislative contact names. Commissioner Montoya reported that the University of California's Legislative Day at the Capitol would be on March 6.

Commission Chair Arkatov said the intent is to gather information from all higher education systems about such legislative contact days in order that the Commission might assist them beforehand on matters of common ground. He noted that Cathy Younger, a member of the California Community Colleges Board of Governors and alternate member of the Commission, was present.

Commissioner Pesqueira proposed that Commission members meet year-round with members of the Legislature. He said this could involve individual members each time the Commission meets in Sacramento. Vice Chair Schulze emphasized that the Commission's message should remain consistent across all such contacts and that Commission members should be at the Capitol as often as possible.

Commissioner Forhan reported that Governor Davis had recently appointed Antonia Hernandez to the Board of Governors. Ms. Hernandez is President and General Counsel of the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund (MALDEF).

Commissioner Rodriguez said legislative staff and committee consultants should not be overlooked during Commission contacts. He said members and consultants should continue to be invited to the Commission's meetings to discuss pending legislation.

Vice Chair Schulze asked for and received a motion to approve the *Blueprint for Progress*. It was seconded and passed without dissent.

**Federal update,
February 2001**

Vice Chair Schulze called on Commission staff member Karl Engelbach to give the federal update. He reported that the appropriation bill for federal fiscal year 2001 had been signed into law. President Bush was scheduled to release details of his education budget proposals for 2002. He said there was concern about the impact of the President's proposed tax cut on future discretionary education spending. He reported on the configuration and committee assignments in the new Congress, including representation by Californians. He reported that 32 California higher education institutions, mostly community colleges, receive federal grants that range between \$300,000 to \$450,000 under the federal Hispanic-serving institution program.

Mr. Engelbach noted that, at the December meeting, Commissioners expressed interest in passing a resolution or recommendation to make a change in the federal Pell Grant income-sensitivity formula which limits the ability of California Community College students to receive a maximum award in that program. He cited the recommendation on page 9 of the agenda item 10 that was proposed for Committee action. He said that staff had, at the direction of the Commission at the December meeting, sent a letter on this issue to all California Congressional members.

Chair Arkatov reported that he had asked Vice Chair Chandler to extend an invitation to Congress members McKeon and Miller to attend the next meeting of the Commission.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed without dissent to adopt the recommendation language on page 9 of the agenda item.

Adjournment Having no further business, Vice Chair Schulze adjourned the meeting at 10:58 a.m.
